

CHILD SUPPORT: FROM THE FATHER'S SIDE

- Child support is payment by a non-custodial parent to pay living expenses of his or her child. Both parents are required by law to support their child...
- *No matter how young the parents are.*
- *Whether or not they ever got married or divorced.*
- *Whether or not they both wanted to have the baby.*
- *At least until the child's 18th birthday.*
- *Regardless of income.*
- *No matter what debts they owe.*

No matter what!

Do mothers have to pay support when children live with their Dads?

- *Yes. Either parent can be required to pay support.*

Can a father who is under 18 years of age be declared a baby's legal father and ordered to pay child support?

- *Yes. Age does not matter. A baby's father can be ordered to pay child support at any age.*

Can a parent pay his bills before he pays his child support?

- *No. If a tribunal orders child support, the child support payments come first. They are taken out of your paycheck before you even see it.*

What is a tribunal?

- *A tribunal is the legal body within a state, according to state law, with the authority to decide child support cases. A judge or a hearing officer will hear your case.*

If a father has more than one child by different mothers, is he only responsible for the oldest or the one that files for child support first?

- *No. A father is required to support all of his children. Multi-family guidelines set the amount of support if there are children by two or more mothers.*

Will you owe child support if you join the Army?

- *Yes. All of the Armed Forces collect child support.*

If you change jobs will you have to pay child support?

- *Yes. The new employer will withhold support payments from your wages.*

If you move away will you have to pay child support?

- *Yes. They will find you. States and foreign countries cooperate with each other to collect support.*

What if you **REFUSE** to pay?

- *You could be arrested, fined, or even jailed. You could lose your driver's license. Your income tax refund, lottery winnings, or other state or federal payments may be taken to pay child*

support. Your passport can be denied. The debt can go on your credit report. If child support puts a lien on your property, you could lose the right to sell or transfer it. Child support debts can be collected, even after the child is an adult. When you have a child support order you must pay it.

Does the father's name on the birth certificate make him the legal father?

- *No. If the baby's parents are not married, a legal process must establish paternity. Paternity can be established at the hospital at the time of the child's birth.*

Is it necessary to establish paternity if the parents plan to get married?

- *Yes. Paternity should be established anyway. Plans change and people change. It is important to give a child a legal father from the beginning.*

What if you are served with a legal notice that a baby's mother named you as the father?

- *You should respond to this notice. There is no advantage to you to ignore the notice. If you do not attend the hearing, a tribunal can find you are the father by default. Some of your choices are:*
 - *Get a lawyer to help you.*

- *Sign a statement voluntarily that you are the legal father. The tribunal will then order child support.*

- *Take a paternity test. If the test shows that you are the baby's father, paternity will be established and you will be ordered to pay support.*
- *Refuse to take a paternity test. However, if you do not take a test and fail to attend the hearing, the tribunal could establish paternity by default and order you to pay support.*

Do they draw blood for paternity tests?

- *No. Most tests take a swab in the mouth from the inner cheeks of the child and each parent. It does not hurt.*

What if I can't pay child support?

- *Sometimes Dads don't have an income or lose their jobs. You should attend all hearings and explain your circumstances to the hearing officials. If you lose your job, you should request a hearing for a modification. State guidelines take into account the father's situation.*

If you are in jail, will you owe child support?

- *You will owe support until your order is changed or modified. Ask your attorney to help you, or contact the child support agency with the order. Let them know you are unable to pay.*

I don't want to get involved in this.

- *This is serious. Get help from someone who understands the child support system. Stay involved. You and your child will benefit.*

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT YOUR STATE CHILD SUPPORT AGENCY

Wisconsin

<http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/bcs/>

Minnesota

<http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/groups>

Michigan

<http://www.michigan.gov/fia/>

Ohio

<http://jfs.ohio.gov/ocs/>

Indiana

<http://www.state.in.us/fssa/children/support/>

Illinois

<http://www.ilchildsupport.com/>

Visit the federal website at
<http://fatherhood.hhs.gov>



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